

MINUTES
DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 5, 2008, 6:30 p.m.
Conference Room
Basement Level, Town Hall

- 1) **Call to Order** – Mr. Bockstael called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- 2) **Roll Call** - Members in attendance: Bruce Bockstael, Andrea Boyle, Jay Hallinan, Joe Hickey, and Steve Hine. Also present: Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner

Members absent: Tony Margiotta.

- 3) **Public Comments** - There was no one from the public in attendance.
- 4) **Minutes** – Minutes of the February 6, 2008 meeting. Mr. Bockstael asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes, and none were requested. Mr. Hickey motioned to approve the minutes, Mr. Hallinan seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

5) PROJECT REVIEWS

5.1 APPLICATION NO. 104-2007 – 1088 Silas Deane Highway (Former Cingular) – AT&T – Seeking review of proposed signage rebranding. Mark Cohen was present on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Bradley said that the square footage of the proposed signage has been revised and is in conformance with the signage regulations. She said that the appliqué for the door is also acceptable, because it does not mask more than the maximum 25% of the door.

Mr. Hallinan said that the “authorized dealer” part of the sign appears to be like advertising, and the Town has been moving away from allowing that. Mr. Cohen said that the “authorized dealer” is part of the name consistently used by the company for this type of store, and should not be considered advertising. Mr. Bockstael said that the Town tries to respect company design and naming preferences, so using “Authorized Dealer” should not be a problem. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve, Ms. Boyle seconded, and the vote showed all in favor.

5.2 APPLICATION NO. 109-2008 – 462 Silas Deane Highway – Roche Service Co. – Review of proposed signage. Melvin Mayo of A-NuSign, West Hartford, was present on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Bradley said that the size of the proposed signage complies with the applicable Town regulations. Mr. Mayo said that the sign will not be internally lit, and the lettering on the windows is white. The lettering in one of the window panes has a phone number. The consensus of the Committee members was to not allow the phone number, for consistency with the Committee’s policy to not allow signage as advertising. The words in the other windows are brand names and not considered advertising.

Mr. Hallinan made a motion to approve the application, with the condition that the telephone number be removed from the window. Mr. Hine seconded, and the vote showed all in favor.

5.3 APPLICATION NO. 111-2008 – 1410A Berlin Turnpike (Cedar Shopping Center) – Fabulous Jewelry Inc. – Review of proposed signage. Jason Yoo was present on behalf of Fabulous Jewelry. Ms. Bradley said that the sign as proposed is larger than the Town regulations allow. She also said that additional “contextual” information is needed for proper review of the application, including: a picture of the building with a scale representation of the proposed signage added to the picture; store front dimensions; and information about lighting of the sign, if any. Mr. Yoo asked if there is an appeal process to allow the larger sign, because the sign was already made before they knew signage requirements applied. Ms. Bradley said that the Planning and Zoning Commission has the authority to approve larger signs, if it is needed for consistency with other, existing signs. She said that PZC would also need the additional contextual information for them to consider a larger sign. Ms. Bradley said that the contextual information would need to be submitted by March 12th for it to be considered at the next Committee meeting on March 19th.

5.4 APPLICATION NO. 105-2008 – 580 Silas Deane Highway – The Flower Box – Review of proposed addition to south side of existing building. Paul Randazzo was present on behalf of the applicant and owner of the property, DLL, LLC. Mr. Randazzo explained that an addition is proposed for the south side of the building. The addition would be split into an eastern, rear section for storage, and a western, front section for vehicle storage/garage. No doors are planned for the garage openings. The exterior stucco finish, trim and colors would match those of the Wild Rover restaurant. Mr. Randazzo said that the owner may apply in the future to update the façade of the existing building along Silas Deane Highway, so it would match the restaurant and proposed addition.

Ms. Bradley said that the application would come through Design Review again, since some information is not yet available, such as a site plan with parking, exterior lighting and colors. Several improvements were suggested by the Committee members for Mr. Randazzo to relay to the property owner, including: install doors in the garage openings, install bollards to protect the corners of the garage openings, and upgrade existing building façade at the same time as construction of the addition, for uniform appearance. Mr. Randazzo said he thought that the comments were reasonable and would review them with the owner.

5.5 APPLICATION NO. 107-2008 – 123 Progress Drive – CREC Soundbridge – Review of proposed additions, renovations and site improvements. Present to represent the applicant were Steve Dewey of Quisenberry Arcari Architects, Farmington, and Mark Fisher of TO Design, LLC, New Britain. Mr. Dewey said that the expansion is needed to accommodate expanding programs at this school for the hearing impaired. The expansion would almost double the building square footage from 16,000 to 31,000. The addition would include a room for the community to use. No parking expansion is planned as there would be no increase in staff. The design of the addition would have gables to match the design of the existing building. The roof of the addition is designed to have a low peak to minimize visual impacts to the surrounding neighbors. There will be a new playground area on the side of the property away from the adjoining residences. Some trees will be removed to accommodate construction, but they will be replaced with sycamore and London Plane trees. Mr. Dewey

said that he expects no concerns from the residence owners, since there have been no complaints, and the design presents little visible change for them.

Several improvements were suggested by the Committee members, including: bollards to protect the loading dock doorway on the south side, and additional evergreen trees for year-round screening of the building from the adjoining residences. The consensus of the Committee members was that the proposed addition was well-designed, and consistent with the campus-style development planned by the same owner for other, adjoining parcels. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve, Mr. Hallinan seconded, and the vote showed all in favor.

5.6 APPLICATION NO. 110-2008 – 1267-1309 Silas Deane Highway (Goff Brook Shops) – Arby's Restaurant – Review of proposed construction of a drive thru restaurant. Matt Walsh of B. L. Companies was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Walsh said that an Arby's Restaurant is proposed for the southeast corner of the parking lot for the Goff Brook Shops. The restaurant would be 3,000 square feet, and include a drive thru, outdoor menus with landscaping, a dumpster area with screening, and additional landscaping in the parking lot surrounding the restaurant. A site plan was presented to show the building location and review the traffic flow pattern proposed for the drive thru.

The Committee members expressed several concerns about the proposed location of the restaurant and its impact on the vacant store in the Goff Brook Shops that would be behind it, including: reduce visibility of the store front; reduced parking in front of the store; and drive thru traffic impeding access to the store. The Committee members made several suggestions to address the location issue, including different drive thru traffic patterns and different building locations and orientations inside the parking lot. The Committee members also suggested changes to the exterior of the restaurant for consistency with the exterior of the rest of the Goff Brook Shops, including a darker color brick exterior, and green-colored roofing.

Public comment: Adjacent landowner Sylvia Gaston, and her attorney Lee Johnson, were present to provide comments on the application. Mr. Johnson said that Ms. Gaston owns the building next door to the south that contains the True Value Hardware and other retail establishments. He said Ms. Gaston believes that the proposed restaurant location will block the visibility of the retail store fronts and reduce the desirability of the building. Ms. Gaston also said that she believed she has been a good neighbor to the Goff Brook Shops by agreeing to drainage easements needed for that project when it was built. Mr. Johnson said that he hoped that the impact to Ms. Gaston's property would be considered during the design and approval of site plans for the restaurant.

Mr. Walsh said that 50% of sales at an Arby's restaurant come from drive thru business, so the project could not move forward without a drive thru. However, he would talk with the land owner about moving the restaurant location to the north inside the parking lot, to reduce the visual impact to the Gaston property and the vacant store. He said he would also explore the different drive thru traffic patterns, building designs and building exterior changes suggested by the Committee.

6) Other Business – None.

7) Next Meeting Date: March 19, 2008 (regularly scheduled date).

8) **Adjournment** – Mr. Hallinan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m., Mr. Hickey seconded, and the vote showed all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Committee Recording Secretary